had in 1994. And all of them have either a D or an F rating by the National Taxpayers Union.

A lot of people forget that we don't have to guess how people perform up here because there are all kinds of organizations that are giving us ratings. How is that going to affect some of the other elections? If you look back and you look at the Members of Congress that were defeated or retired in 1994, in the Senate there are 11, and 8 of them fell into this same spending class. In other words, those individuals who are getting defeated now in the polls are individuals who are big spenders and individuals who are for tax increases as opposed to cutting the size of Government.

So I think there are some very real ramifications to this that are political ramifications. I suggest to you, Mr. President, that there are a lot of Members in here who, if they vote against our effort—it is a genuine effort for a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution—will have to pay the political price for that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SESSIONS). The Senator from Rhode Island is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. REED. Thank you, Mr. President.

OUR EDUCATIONAL IMPERATIVE

Mr. REED. I rise today to speak about an issue that is critical to our country and critical to our future, and that issue is education.

Education has always been crucial to our country. Indeed, one of the greatest triumphs of our Nation has been the creation of public education through high school and in the postwar years the expansion of access to higher education.

Our ancestors grasped a fundamental truth. Education is the engine that powers our economy, and it is the force that sustains our over 200-year experiment in democracy. ''Yankee ingenuity,'' groomed in the schoolrooms of New England and transported across the continent, spurred an era of invention that catapulted America to economic leadership. But education is more than just economic progress. Education has allowed us to keep faith with the basic tenet of our country. At the core of American experience is the commitment to equal opportunity, and education is the greatest source of opportunity in a free society. It can transcend the circumstances of income, region, race, and gender to reaffirm the enduring belief that an individual through effort can achieve his or her fullest potential in America.

Throughout our history, education has always been an important part of the American experience. Today, it is rapidly becoming the essential component of our national life. The combination of extraordinary progress in technology, particularly information technology, and the unprecedented growth of international commerce has made education the key to our leadership in the world and our prosperity here at home.

As we pass from the industrial age to the information age, the work of the future demands skills which only can be obtained through lifetime learning. And as we move into an era of global competition, we find ourselves pitted against workers and students around the world. What might have been adequate for America in the age of the Model T in a more insular world is plainly inadequate in the age of the Pentium processor and in a world in which the boundaries of business seldom conform to the boundaries of nations.

As Norman Augustine, vice chairman and CEO of Lockheed-Martin, said, ''More and more, we see that competition in the international market place is in reality a battle of the classrooms.''

The American people recognize that we can and we must do much more to improve the quality of education. Studies comparing American students with their foreign contemporaries in the ''battle of the classrooms,'' as referred to by Mr. Augustine, show that American students are not first in the world. In fact, they are only about average. The third international mathematics and science study, TIMSS for short, the largest international science and math study ever undertaken, was released last fall.

The study found that U.S. eighth graders scored barely above the world average in science and below the world average in mathematics. Being ''average'' will not sustain the United States in a world where technology and trade demand excellence.

Just last month, Education Week, in collaboration with the Pew Charitable Trust, released a report card on the condition of public schools in the 50 States. The report characterized public education in the United States as ''riddled with excellence but rife with mediocrity.'' With respect to the bottom line, student performance, the conclusion of the report is sobering. ''We did not give States a letter grade. If we had, all would have failed. Nationally, only 28 percent of 4th graders tested in 1994 were able to read at or above the proficient level and only 21 percent of 8th graders tested in 1992 were proficient or better in math.''

The American people recognize these shortcomings and the compelling need to enhance education in the United States. They also want the Federal Government to play an appropriate role in this process of educational reform. Last month, a survey was released by the Coalition for America's Children, and it found that 76 percent of those polled favored increases in Federal spending for education.

However, spending alone will not reinvigorate education in the United States. At every level of Government—Federal, State, and local—calling on parents, teachers, business and community leaders, the great civic core of America, we must all work together to make education come alive in the lives of our children. Our task is twofold: To improve the quality of public education and to enhance access to higher education.

Now, when we consider elementary and secondary education, we immediately must recognize the central role played by the States. Historically, States have been the leaders in public education from grades K through 12. And when we boast of the extraordinary success of public education in the United States throughout our history, we are paying tribute to the foresight and wisdom of State and local leaders who invested in education. But it is not without some irony that today, as we talk about devolution of more and more social programs and policies to the States, we at the same time point to the disturbing signs of educational malaise. The ''devolutionists'' frequently prescribe the States as the all-purpose remedy for every social problem, forgetting that the States like the Feds are political institutions awash in conflicting interests and afflicted with lapses of political will. That is not to suggest that the role of education in the States has been overtaken. It should suggest, however, that States alone have not and cannot cut through the tangle of financial difficulties, political interests and emerging problems that beset public education as we approach the next century. There is a real opportunity and need for Federal leadership as a catalyst for reform.

In confronting the challenge of public education, we cannot confine ourselves to just the schools. We must reach out beyond the schools to the children. The first goal of Goals 2000 is that all children will start school ready to learn. And as we discover more and more about childhood development, this goal becomes increasingly more important. It also becomes increasingly more obvious that our efforts must encompass the youngest children as well as those children just ready to enter school. Scientific evidence points to the critical years from birth to age 3 in the development of intellectual and emotional abilities. As such, child care is an essential part of any strategy for the long-term improvement of education. Good prenatal care, pediatric health care, and quality day care are all components of educational reform. In fact, an emphasis on early intervention may save scarce educational dollars in the long run. Research indicates that children who attend quality child care programs are less likely to be placed in special education or to be retained in grade.

It is here in the area of child care that the Federal Government has long played an important roll. With the creation of the Head Start program in 1965, the Federal Government embarked on an ambitious attempt to reach low-income children. Over the

past several decades, Head Start has gained widespread and bipartisan support. But despite this support, the program still only serves one out of three eligible children. More must be done to reach a larger population of eligible children. Moreover, we must consciously develop programs that involve very young children.

If we are serious about having all children ready to learn when they enter school, then we must commit ourselves to ensuring that every child has affordable access to quality health care and day care. We cannot and should not usurp the role of parents. As such, our strategies should be just as much about enabling parents to be better parents, with the time and income to do their part, as it is to reach out and teach the children.

While we summon the will and the resources to prepare children for school, we cannot ignore the urgent need to reform our schools. The recent study by Education Week revealed that on average less than one-third of fourth graders were proficient in reading and less than one-third of eighth graders were proficient in math. In a comparison of cut-off points on employer tests to student scores on national standardized exams, researchers, Richard Murnane and Frank Levy, found that ''close to half of all 17-year-olds cannot read or do math at the level needed to get a job in a modern automobile plant.'' And consistent with these findings, the TIMSS report revealed that American students were not leading the world but were about average in a world economy that increasingly demands excellence, not mediocrity.

In evaluating this lackluster performance, the TIMSS report surprisingly did not blame the usual suspects—too much TV, not enough class time, not enough homework. It turns out that American eighth graders spend more hours per year in math and science classes than their Japanese and German counterparts. American teachers assign more homework and spend more class time discussing it than teachers in Germany and Japan. And, it turns out that heavy TV watching is as common among Japanese eighth graders as it is among American eighth graders. What then is the problem? The TIMSS report strongly suggests that American students receive a ''less-advanced curriculum, which is also less focused.'' At the heart of this disappointing performance is the content and rigor of what is taught and the techniques used to teach it. In short, content and instructional standards are not adequate.

We will not materially improve public education in the United States until we adopt challenging standards, assess the performance of children with regard to these standards, and hold schools accountable for these standards. Standards, assessment, accountability: the keys to reinvigorating public education.

A few years back, there was a popular book entitled All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten. I guess I was a little slow because I'm tempted to say I learned a great deal in the Army and that was many years after kindergarten. One of the great lessons of my Army experience is the transforming power of high quality standards, realistic assessments, and accountability. In the wake of the Vietnam war, a demoralized and publicly scorned military began to reinvent itself and, over the last 2 decades, has become one of the most effective institutions in the country. Many factors can be cited: the development of an all volunteer force, the leadership of an extraordinary group of professionals who served in Vietnam and went on to senior positions in the Pentagon. But, a critical, and sometimes overlooked, factor was the development of training doctrine that rested on detailed standards and realistic assessments.

As a company grade officer, I saw the transition from unimaginative field manuals couched in general terms to materials that broke down missions into constituent tasks, stressed the mastery of these tasks, and, then, the careful merging of individual tasks into group effort. At every stage, clear standards of performance were identified and evaluated. Complementing these doctrinal changes was a renewed emphasis on ''training the trainer''. Professional development was stressed not only for officers but throughout the ranks, particularly non-commissioned officers who are the backbone of the military. Finally, accountability, always a hallmark of the military service, could be refocused from the mundane, ''did the troops look good'', to the critical, could the unit accomplish its mission in the most realistic circumstances. American education, today, seems to be at a similar crossroads as the post-Vietnam military. And, the lesson of standards, assessments, and accountability seems equally compelling, for education today.

American students are graded from the moment they enter school. They repeatedly take tests. But, seldom are they measured against agreed upon content standards. As such, school is less about understanding a core body of knowledge and using that knowledge than it is about attendance. For too many students, the only ''standard'' that counts is showing up frequently enough to get a high school diploma. Thus, it is no surprise that half of high school graduates would have a difficult time getting a job in a modern automobile plant.

In a recent survey by a national nonprofit group, Public Agenda, reported in the Washington Post, high school students expressed their criticism of school. At the top of their list was the observation that their classes are not challenging enough. A typical response from a student is revealing. '' 'I didn't do one piece of homework last year in math' he said. 'I just took the tests . I'd get A's on the tests, not do the homework, and I got a B in class. There's just lots of ways to get around it.''' This subering comment was found throughout this discussion in the report, but, the researchers were encouraged to find ''strong support among students for having tougher standards in class. Three-fourths of them said they believed they would learn more, and school would seem more meaningful, if they were pushed harder by better teachers.'' As Deborah Wadsworth, the executive director of Public Agenda, declared, ''The students seem to be crying out for the adults in their lives to take a stand and inspire them to do more.''

Standards are about excellence, but they are also about equality of opportunity. Diane Ravitch, a professor at Columbia and a former official in President Bush's education department, wrote,

> ''[n]ations that establish national standards do so to insure equality of education as well as higher achievement . . . they make explicit what they expect children to learn to insure that all children have access to the same educational opportunities.'' Until we establish effective standards and evaluate children according to those standards, we will continue to ignore disparities in the educational experience of children throughout the United States.

In keeping with the critical role of standards as benchmarks for excellence and equality of opportunity, it is exciting to note President Clinton's proposal to develop voluntary national assessments for reading at the fourth grade and math at the eighth grade. These assessments could truly be the bridge between standards and accountability; the bridge to a renewal of public education, in the United States.

Recognizing the critical role that standards can play in the reformation of public education, Congress in 1994 adopted the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Goals 2000 sought to place voluntary national standards at the center of national debate about educational reform.

As a member of the Education and Labor Committee in the other body, I was an active participant in the drafting of Goals 2000. I vigorously pressed to ensure that standards were a key component of the strategy for educational reform, and that there would be accountability for these standards. One of the persistent failures of educational reform is the failure to follow through. We all are aware of repeated studies that chronicle the problems of public education and propose credible reforms, but never seemed to go anylace. All of these studies seem to languish, gathering dust on the shelves. Even if the diagnosis is right, no mechanism is put in place to translate plans into results.

As such, I thought that, along with standards, the Goals 2000 process should require the state and local educational authorities to answer a fundamental question: what will you do when a school or a school system fails to meet the standards established for

its students? Failure to answer this question and to act accordingly will doom meaningful educational reform.

I was pleased that a provision encompassing this question was included as a requirement of the state plan pursuant to Goals 2000. In the spirit of the voluntary nature of Goals 2000, the Federal Government did not mandate any particular approach to failing schools, but, in the process of developing standards-based reform, it would prompt states to ask this fundamental question. This provision is still on the books. However, the overall importance of the state plan has been diminished. Tucked into the budget signed by President Clinton in April of 1996 is language that removes the requirement for these State plans to be submitted to the Secretary of Education.

This unraveling of the minimal requirements of Goals 2000 does not bode well for ultimately tackling the tough issues of reform at the local level. Without the ''seriousness'' engendered by preparing a submission for Secretarial review, these plans might become another specimen on the dusty shelf of accumulated plans for educational reform. Moreover, despite the protests of many local elected leaders, many local educational leaders will concede that requirements in Washington frequently help them to cut through the tangle of local interests that impede effective local reform.

Nevertheless, Goals 2000 is a milestone in emphasizing voluntary national standards and hopefully will continue to serve as a springboard for educational reform. Standards are critical, but without good teaching these standards will also languish.

IMPROVED TEACHING

Challenging content standards must be matched by effective teachers. Continuous professional development is no longer a luxury and can no longer be incidental to teaching. The exponential growth in knowledge and constantly changing insights on teaching techniques require continual reeducation of teachers. Regrettably, such constant professional development is the exception today. Resources for professional development at the local, State, and Federal levels are constrained. But, more than resources are necessary. There must be a renewed commitment by all concerned parties. In particular, teachers and their unions must be at the forefront of this effort for professional development.

Teacher unions are powerful forces. They must become powerful forces to raise the capability and expertise of their members. Too often, teacher unions are perceived as interested only in the benefits of their members and not the in improvement of education. I do not believe this to be the case, but this perception is widely held and must be reversed. Teacher unions should be seen as champions for raising the quality of teaching in the United States. That means challenging their members to be better teachers, helping them to meet that important challenge and, in the small number of cases where individual teachers are not up to the challenge, working with local authorities to remove that teacher from the classroom. It also means being full partners in local reform efforts and viewing this reform effort in terms of what it adds to the quality of education rather than what it may subtract from the current status quo. This mission should not be viewed as something extra that the union does as a courtesy to the public. It must be at the very core of their activities and increasingly the dominant rationale for their existence.

At the Federal level, we must encourage this renewal of teaching. I am delighted with President Clinton's efforts to support enhanced teaching. Under the President's budget, 100,000 more teachers will be able to seek certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. The National Board has worked hard to establish nationally accepted credentials for excellence in teachers. Their certification of ''master teacher,'' akin to the board certification of physician specialist, raises the standards for teachers and creates a pool of mentors who can assist other teachers to excel. President Clinton has increased funding for other professional development programs like the Eisenhower Professional Development Program and the National Science Foundation's Teacher Enhancement Program. The President has proposed a series of technology initiatives which will also assist teachers. The President's Technology Challenge Grant Program supports private-public sector partnerships to develop models for using technology in education, such as providing electronic field trips for new teachers to learn from expert teachers and mentors around the country. The President's technology literacy challenge Fund will leverage public funds to target school districts and schools committed to helping teachers integrate technology into the classroom. Finally, the administration's 21st century teachers initiative will recruit thousands of technologically literate teachers to upgrade their knowledge and help at least five of their colleagues to master the use of technology in the classroom.

We have talked about elementary and secondary education. But, frankly, excellent public education at the elementary and secondary grades today is simply a prelude to lifetime learning. As we work to provide students with the skills necessary to achieve and compete in this information age, it is essential that we also expand access to postsecondary education.

Indeed, according to the National Bureau of Labor Statistics, 60 percent of all new jobs created between 1992 and the year 2005 will require education beyond high school. A college education is also the key to higher wages, as college graduates, on average, earn 50 percent more than high school graduates.

For too many families, however, a college education for their children is growing increasingly out of reach. College costs rose by 126 percent between 1980 and 1990, while family income increased by only 73 percent. This situation has been coupled with a shift in the source of Federal aid also. In 1975, 80 percent of student aid came in the form of grants and 20 percent in the form of loans. Now the opposite is true. As a result, students and families are going deeper into debt as they attempt to pay for the costs of a college education. The average student loan debt burden is expected to reach $21,000 by next year.

Steps must be taken to make college more accessible and affordable in order to address these trends. I am pleased by the President's many proposals in this area. His call to provide assistance to middle-class families in the form of a $1,500 tax credit for the first 2 years of college will cover the costs of most community colleges and provide a significant downpayment for a 4-year college. It would certainly be a tremendous development in our history if for the first time we can guarantee at least 2 years of postsecondary education as we now guarantee 12 years of elementary and secondary education.

Families would also be able to choose a $10,000 tax deduction for college, for graduate school, community college, and certified training programs. These proposals are a common sense approach to help students enter and remain in college, lessen their reliance on loans, and provide an avenue for lifelong learning.

Our efforts to increase access to college cannot include tax relief alone. We must also provide a boost to the Pell grants created and named after my predecessor, Senator Claiborne Pell. The Pell grant is the foundation of student financial aid for low- to moderate-income families.

Over the past 20 years, however, we have witnessed the steady decline of the purchasing power of the maximum Pell grant. According to a 1996 college board report, the Pell grant covers only one-third of the cost at public universities, down from one-half in the mid-1980's, and about 10 percent of the cost at private institutions, down from about 20 percent in the mid-1980's.

The task before us is to restore the purchasing power of the Pell grant. The President has recognized this fact by seeking to increase the maximum Pell grant from $2,700 to $3,000. This is a good start. But I believe more should be done so we can fulfill the Pell grant's promise of providing a substantial and consistent grant to low-income students.

America's future is being forged today in America's classrooms. It is our task to ensure that this great work of education is built on the solid foundation of challenging standards, realistic assessments, and thorough accountability. It is also our task to ensure that education is a life-long process and that affordable higher education must be available to all.

Our economy demands educated workers. Our democracy requires informed and responsible citizens. As we renew public education and open the doors to higher education, we will propel America into the next century powered by knowledge, tempered by experience, and committed to justice. We can do no less.

I yield back my time.

Mr. FEINGOLD addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRATULATING SENATOR REED

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, before the Senator from Rhode Island leaves, I want to be the first proud Senator to congratulate him on his first speech in the Senate. It is very appropriate that the speech was about a topic that he knows a great deal about, education, and, of course, in so doing he follows in the footsteps of his predecessor, Senator Claiborne Pell. I just want to say on behalf of my colleagues how delighted we are that he has joined us here. I look forward to learning from him and working with him, particularly on the subject of education, Mr. President.

Mr. REED. I thank the distinguished Senator, Mr. President.

BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I rise today to use the morning business time to further the debate on the balanced budget amendment and to indicate that I oppose the proposed amendment to our Constitution.

During the 103d Congress, Mr. President, this body wisely rejected the proposed amendment. It did so again during the 104th Congress, a Congress which, perhaps unlike any other in our recent history, seemed intent on finding different ways to amend the U.S. Constitution, actually voting on more amendments to the Constitution than any of its recent predecessors.

Mr. President, some of us believe there are many reasons to oppose this constitutional amendment, and we have been hearing a lot of them. A number of respected authorities have raised several significant points of concern, including problems related to the role of the courts and the power it might confer on unelected judges to set our national budget policies and priorities.

Another serious concern that we have heard a lot about and we will hear even more about is the damage this proposal could do to the Social Security Program. There may also be unintended changes to Presidential impoundment authority arising out of the constitutional amendment.

I believe that the constitutional amendment, in addition, will lead to unnecessary and possibly dislocating restrictions on our ability to establish capital or investment budgets, to even have the kind of flexibility that States have or municipalities have when they happen to have a balanced budget requirement.

Finally, Mr. President, I think the balanced budget amendment leads to an effective prohibition on developing a fiscally responsible budget structure that could include a surplus fund, a rainy day fund, a fund that could be tapped for emergencies, such as national disasters or military conflicts. The way it is drafted, we would not be able to plan for or project even a small surplus that could actually be used to solve an emergency.

Mr. President, during the next several days as we consider the amendment, I, along with many others, will comment on some of those concerns in more detail as we debate amendments designed to address those defects that I have just listed. For now, Mr. President, I want to focus on the underlying assumption behind the proposed amendment, namely that without making this change to our Constitution, the Congress and the President will not balance the budget, that it just will not happen. It is a fair issue, it is a fair question, a fair premise for this whole debate.

Mr. President, the assumption that that job will not be done by this Congress and this President is not necessarily right. We have brought the unified budget deficit down since 1992 by about 60 percent. Yet, all the rhetoric on the floor has not changed one bit. It has not changed one iota to reflect the fact that real and significant progress has been made in the past 4 years. All of the naysaying about ''it can't be done, it will never be done, Congress and the President will never get together and do this,'' has at least got to be questioned a little bit by the advocates of the balanced budget amendment when they look at the record of the last 4 years. We have seen several plans offered by both sides that will bring the unified budget into balance by the year 2002. We have seen that from Democrats, we have seen it from Republicans, and we have seen it in a bipartisan package.

Mr. President, I recall when some of the Republican Members were pushing for a 7-year balanced budget by the year 2002 using CBO numbers, and the President was not sure he wanted to go with that. But, I agreed with the Republicans. I felt they were right, that we needed to have that timeframe and have a clear commitment. I still stand by that. Today we have a President and a Congress in agreement that the date we should be going for is the year 2002.

In fact, nearly every Member of this body voted for a unified budget plan that reached balance by 2002 at some time during the 104th Congress, and I really think working together this year, understanding that neither party is running the whole show here, that we can come together in a bipartisan package that will, in fact, finish the good work we have done and balance the budget by the year 2002.

Mr. President, all the budget plans I mentioned, all the votes we took, all the progress we have made in the past 4 years, was done without a constitutional mandate. In fact, it was done without a constitutional amendment floating out among the States, while we wonder whether the States will ratify it or by when they will ratify it. In fact, Mr. President, I firmly believe that if we had adopted a constitutional amendment in 1993, 1994, or 1995, and sent it to the States for ratification, that many of those balanced budget plans would not have been forthcoming in this Congress, that they would not have even been proposed, because people in both Houses would have been looking to a future date when the hammer would come down, instead of believing that the hammer is coming down now, where we here have been elected to do the job now and not wait for the States to decide whether to ratify a constitutional amendment.

Mr. President, without the ability to hide behind a lengthy ratification process, Congress in the last few years has been forced to live up to its rhetoric at least in part. A Member cannot go back home and say, ''Listen, I am very eager to cut spending in Washington. I don't know exactly what we ought to cut, but once we get that balanced budget amendment ratified, then we will get back to work on it.'' That excuse is not available now. People in an audience for such a Senator or Member of Congress would say back to that person, ''Why don't you just do the job now? You were elected to do it now.'' That is, in fact, what we were elected to do.

Mr. President, I do not think the American public realizes that even if Congress approves the proposed amendment, it could be another 9 years—9 years—before the balanced budget mandate begins to bite. If the proposal languishes with State legislatures, we might not be forced to reach balance in 2002, but until the year 2006. The States get 7 years to ratify, and the provision calls for the amendment to really take its effect, to have its bite, 2 years after that. So it could be the year 2006 if we wait for a constitutional amendment.

Mr. President, there is strong reason to believe the States will not act quickly. We have already heard some loud second thoughts from many State policymakers about the impact of the proposed amendment on their State and local budgets. This proposal may not, in effect, Mr. President, then be the so-called slam-dunk ratification that some people claim it will be.

Ironically, some who voiced their support for a constitutional amendment may not really care. I do not think this is true of everyone, by any means. Some do care. Some are genuinely frustrated and turn only to this